



Northern Ireland Ambulance Service  
Health and Social Care Trust



# **NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE**

## **MANUAL HANDLING POLICY**

**Final Version**



Title:	Manual Handling Policy		
Purpose of Policy:	To set out NIAS Policy on Manual Handling. To promote safe practice, and protect and support staff.		
Directorate Responsible for Policy:	Human Resources and Corporate Services Directorate		
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(01)			
(02)			

**Circulation List:**

This Policy was circulated to the following groups for consultation.

- Trade Unions
- Executive Directors and Senior Managers

Following approval, this Policy document was circulated to the following staff and groups of staff.

- All Trust Staff
- Trust Internet Site/ Intranet Site

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust's (hereafter referred to as 'The Trust') plan for Manual Handling, ensuring compliance with the Manual Handling (Operations) Regulations 1992 as amended 2002 implementing Directive 90/269/EEC.
- 1.2 This policy identifies the Trust's commitment to establish standards for managing Manual Handling risks to our patients, clients and employees within the Trust.
- 1.3 The policy sets out responsibilities and processes in place to ensure safe systems of work on Manual Handling.
- 1.4 This policy has been developed in consultation with internal stakeholders.

## **2.0 Policy Statement**

- 2.1 The Trust promotes a pro-active approach to Manual Handling.
- 2.2 The Trust will minimise risks to patients, staff, clients, and others through the effective use of Manual Handling.
- 2.3 The Manual Handling Policy is a declaration of the Trust's overall aims and principles to ensure that Manual Handling tasks are avoided (via for example automation) or where this is not reasonably practicable, safe systems of work are established to minimise Manual Handling and subsequent risks of injury. It includes a commitment to promote a safe working environment.
- 2.4 Staff must in all cases, consider their duty of care to patients which must also be central to decisions around manual handling.

### **3.0 Definitions**

#### **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992**

The Regulations define **Manual Handling** as:

"...any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force".

The load can be an object, person or animal.

#### **Lifting**

Lifting is the taking hold of part of or all of the weight of an object.

#### **Competent person**

Someone with suitable training, knowledge, experience or other skills to render them competent.

### **4.0 Scope of the Policy**

- 4.1 This policy applies to all personnel across the Trust.
- 4.2 This policy provides guidance on the Trust and employee's roles and responsibilities when undertaking Manual Handling tasks. It outlines the processes in place to assist staff to reduce potential situations where injury can occur and what should happen if they occur.
- 4.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Procedure for Manual Handling incorporated in the Moving People course provided to all operational staff and the Manual Handling section in 2011-2012 NIAS Annual Workbook provided to all NIAS staff.
- 4.4 This policy must be adhered to by all Trust employees. It will also apply to those who carry out work for the Trust such as contractors and agency staff. It includes a commitment to the continual improvement of Manual Handling tasks and to compliance with Health and Safety, Legal and Statutory requirements.

## **5.0 Policy Objectives**

- 5.1 The Trust will ensure that it has in place suitable and robust governance arrangements to support Manual Handling.
- 5.2 The Health and Safety Committee will review, monitor and report on Manual Handling issues to fulfil the requirements of this policy.
- 5.3 To reduce the risks associated with Manual Handling activities.
- 5.4 To encourage staff, in line with the Trusts' Policy for reporting incidents, to report incidents which have resulted in or which may give rise to a Manual Handling incident, to enable monitoring and to ensure Procedures in place are functioning effectively.
- 5.5 To establish the reporting of Manual Handling incidents annually to the Trust Board.
- 5.6 The Trust will seek assurance, through internal and external Audit, that appropriate and effective system of Manual Handling risks are in place, and that the necessary level of controls and monitoring have been implemented.

## **6.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 6.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring the objectives of this policy are met and resources are made available to implement the policy.

The Chief Executive will delegate responsibility for establishing and monitoring the implementation of this policy to the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services.

The Chief Executive will report to the Trust Board on a regular basis regarding Manual Handling incidents through the Assurance Committee.

- 6.2 The Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services is the designated Executive Director with lead responsibility for Health and Safety management including Manual Handling.

The Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services will report to the Trust's Assurance Committee and Trust Board on matters relating to Manual Handling.

The Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services will Chair the Trust's Health and Safety Committee and will address the requirements of this policy. (Appendix 1 committee structure).

- 6.3 All Trust Executive Directors, Assistant Directors and Senior Managers have responsibility for Manual Handling incidents within the areas of their remit and control. They will ensure that procedures are fully implemented and monitored as part of the Trust's governance requirements.

They will ensure that information required in relation to this policy is reported.

They will develop and implement local arrangements and monitor them to ensure that those under their control adhere to the policy.

They will ensure that clients, patients and visitors to NIAS premises are aware of the NIAS Policy on Manual Handling.

- 6.4 The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for the surveillance, prevention, investigation of Manual Handling incidents across the Trust.

The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for the implementation of the Manual Handling Policy and ensuring there are supporting procedures, guidelines and arrangements, including Manual Handling risk assessments

The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for advising on appropriate resources to facilitate the implementation of Manual Handling issues throughout the Trust.

The Health and Safety Committee is responsible for ensuring periodic review of the policy and associated Procedures.

- 6.5 All Trust staff have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and ensure that they operate in accordance with its supporting procedural arrangements. All staff have a responsibility to protect themselves as well as making all reasonable efforts to safeguard the welfare of patients and all other persons who may be affected by their activities.

## 7.0 Training

- 7.1 The Trust recognises the need for standards in safer manual handling training and the provision of advice. The Trust accepts the legal requirement that all employees receive an appropriate level of manual handling training. This will be completed and identified through the Trust's training needs analysis process.

- 7.2 Manual handling training will only be given by competent person/s. Only staff who have completed a recognised external train the trainer course are deemed competent to deliver manual handling training.

- 7.3 Manual handling instruction is regarded by the Trust as mandatory training and considers it integral to the risk management process and staff must attend training courses in line with the training need analysis when required to do so.

## 8.0 Context and detail of Manual Handling in NIAS

### 8.1 Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 places duties on the Trust to ensure the Health and Safety of its clients and employees whilst at work. This includes the provision of safe systems of work, safe machinery and equipment and adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure their own and others health and safety at work.

The Manual Handling (Operations) Regulations 1992 explicitly requires the Trust to assess Manual Handling tasks which are undertaken by employees and which pose a **significant** risk of injury.

The regulations advocate an ergonomic approach to manual handling.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work and Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 2003 requires the Trust to ensure suitable and sufficient



assessment of risks at work are recorded and reviewed and appoint competent persons to undertake risk assessments.

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 requires Employers to ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair

The Regulations place a duty on the Trust to ensure that Manual Handling tasks are avoided (via for example automation) or where this is not reasonably practicable, safe systems of work established to minimise Manual Handling and subsequent risks of injury.

The provision of adequate information, instruction, training and supervision on safer Manual Handling is required where tasks cannot be readily avoided.

It is the duty of employees while at work to take reasonable care of the Health and Safety of themselves, and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and to co-operate with their employer to enable them to comply with their Health and Safety duties. Employees must inform employers of any work situation which could pose a risk to the Health and Safety of themselves or others and generally to make use of appropriate equipment provided for them, in accordance with their training and the instruction their employer has given them.

**All employees have a duty to attend training delivered by, or on behalf of the Trust which will assist in Manual Handling incidents. All employees have a duty to ensure they act in accordance with relevant codes of conduct in order to minimise risks to themselves, colleagues or Trust property.**

**All employees have a duty to inform the Trust of any Muscular Skeletal Disorder/ Injury occurring as a result of any work activity.**

## **9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 All Manual Handling matters within the Trust will be risk assessed in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work (Regulations) Northern Ireland 2006, the Trust's Risk Management Strategy and Risk Assessment Procedure.

9.2 Sensitive or high risk issues will be managed by the risk owner and monitored by the Health and Safety Committee.

9.3 Manual Handling arrangements and the effectiveness of policies and procedures will be monitored through the Health and Safety Committee which reports to the Trust Board through the Assurance Committee.

- 9.4 The Untoward Incident reporting system (UIR1 & 2) will be used to report Manual Handling incidents. This will allow the Trust to be informed of the risks facing the organisation and to take appropriate action to avoid, minimise or significantly reduce the occurrence or repetition of these incidents.
- 9.5 The Health and Safety Committee will monitor and review Untoward Incidents. In addition, the Senior Executive Management Team (SEMT) will also review Untoward Incidents on a 2 weekly basis.
- 9.6 Accidents/Incidents must be reported in order that the Trust can meet its responsibilities to:
- Inform the Health and Safety Executive (NI) of certain categories of work related accidents
  - Investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses so that preventative action can be taken.
  - Assess significant risks to people involved in the employer's activities so that it may consider control measures to remove or reduce that risk. Provide evidence to support any subsequent claims for benefit (e.g. Temporary Injury Allowance) and/or compensation.
- 9.7 The Clinical Training Manager will ensure the provision of any necessary information, instruction, training and supervision with regard to this policy.
- 9.8 All Managers must ensure that their staff have access to this policy, have reviewed its content, and are aware of its aims and purpose immediately upon its release.
- 9.9 All Trust staff must comply with this policy.

## **10.0 Equality and Human Rights Considerations**

- 10.1 This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75, Schedule 9, of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland guidance states that the purpose of screening is to identify those policies which are likely to have a significant impact on equality of opportunity so that greatest resources can be targeted at them.
- 10.2 This policy has also been considered under the terms of the Human Rights Act, 1998, and was deemed to be compatible with the European Convention Rights contained in that Act.
- 10.3 This policy embraces Diversity, Dignity and Inclusion in line with emerging Human Rights guidance. We recognise, acknowledge and value difference across all people and their backgrounds. We will treat everyone with courtesy

and consideration and ensure that no-one is belittled, excluded or disadvantaged in any way, shape or form.

- 10.4 Using the Equality Commission's screening criteria, no significant equality implications have been identified. This policy will therefore not be subject to an equality impact assessment.
- 10.5 This policy will be included in the Trust's register of screening documentation and maintained for inspection whilst it remains in force.
- 10.6 This document can be made available on request in alternative formats, e.g. Braille, disc, audio cassette and in other languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.

## **11.0 Policy Review**

- 11.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring that all policies are kept under review to ensure that they remain compliant with relevant legislation.
- 11.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee bi-annually, or earlier if changes to legislation, work practices or a significant incident require it. That review will be noted on a subsequent version of this policy, even where there are no substantive changes made or required.

## **12.0 Legal**

- 12.1 Legislative compliance, relevant policies, procedures, statutes, guidance, circulars and other publications relevant to this policy are listed in the

<http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk>

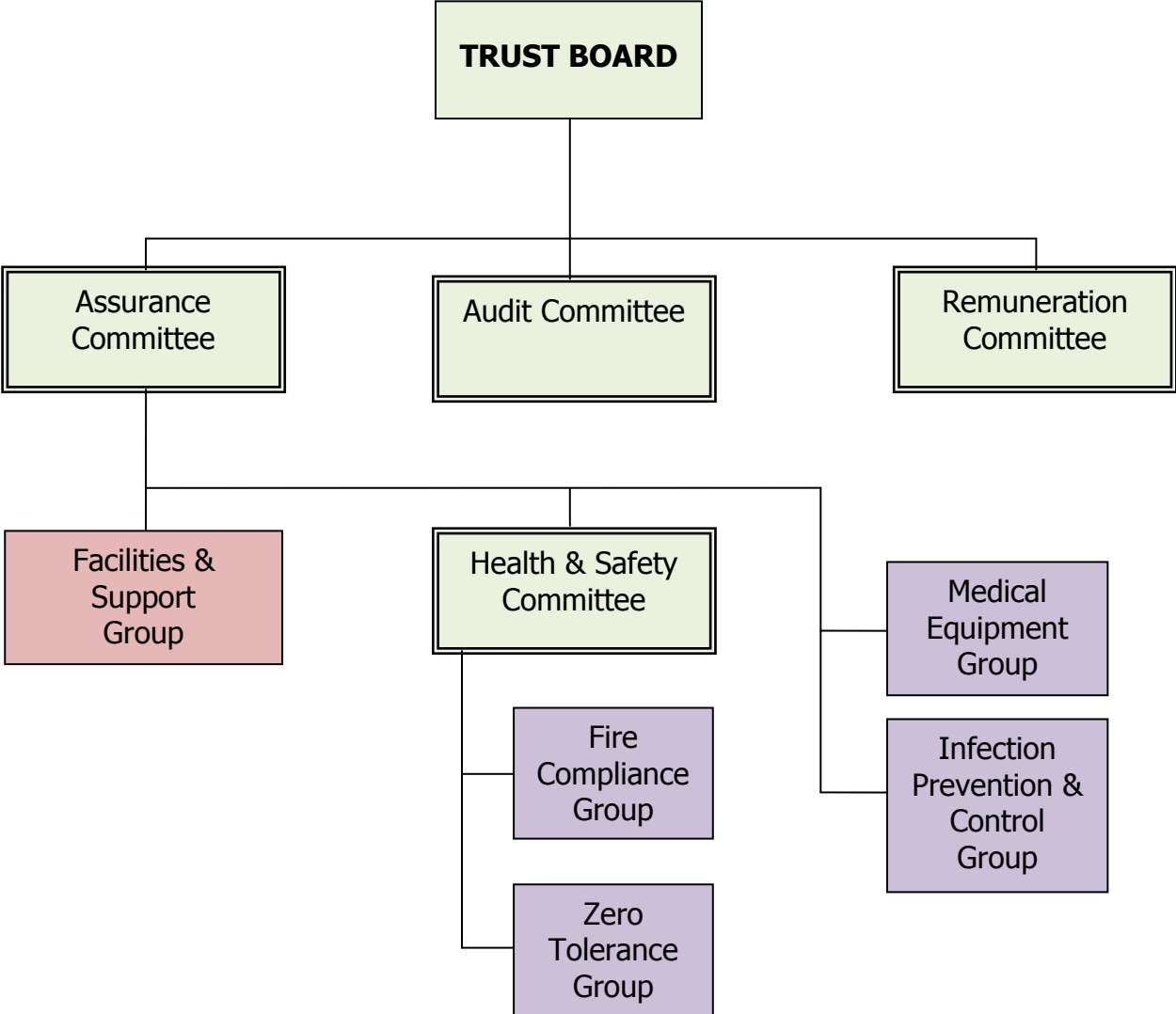
NIAS policies and Procedures can be found using the NIAS Intranet link below:-

[http://nias-sharepoint:81/policies\\_Procedures/Policy.htm](http://nias-sharepoint:81/policies_Procedures/Policy.htm)

- 12.2 Other relevant documents, legislation, statute and guidance can be found at Appendix 2

Appendix 1

Committee and Group Structure



## Appendix 2

### Related documents

- Health and Safety at Work (Regulations) Northern Ireland 2006
- Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978
- Section 75, Schedule 9, of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk>
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work and Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 2003
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations (NI) 1992
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (R.I.D.D.O.R.)
- Moving People Course booklet and notes
- IHCD Basic Training Manual

This list is not exhaustive and other documents can be found by following the links supplied above to the DHSSPSNI and NIAS websites and intranet.